

“RRAFT ADVISORY COMMITTEE”

MEETING # 2 MINUTES

Tuesday, July 10, 2007
6:30 – 9:00 PM
FWP Region 2 Office
3201 Spurgin Road
Missoula

- **Agenda Overview & Introductions**

- Charlie Sperry ~ FWP Recreation Management Specialist

- Charlie went through the agenda items for the meeting and invited visitors and first-time attendees to introduce themselves.

- **Homework Assignment: Report back on trap line comments**

- Charlie Sperry

- Charlie asked committee members to share comments from their traplines. Fourteen members reported and provided the following comments:

Topic: What are trapline members most interested in when they recreate on rivers in west-central Montana?

- A quality recreation experience
- Quiet, uncrowded and undeveloped settings
- A feeling of solitude or being “alone”
- Opportunities to fish and catch high numbers of fish
- A healthy and functioning resource
- Opportunities to view wildlife
- An oasis from day-to-day pressures

Topic: What concerns trapline members most about the rivers in west-central Montana?

- Development
- Degradation of water quality and aquatic habitat
- Installing riprap and cutting woody debris
- Quality of the fishery
- Increased use of motorized craft
- Challenges to stream access law
- A reactive planning approach
- Not enforcing rules and regulations
- Too many access sites
- Lack of appropriate FAS site design (traffic flow, parking, etc.)
- Too many commercial users
- Overcrowding
- Public awareness of appropriate river use and etiquette
- Use fees being required only for commercial users and not for private users
- Use of Alcohol (both related to river use and transportation to and from the river)
- Inappropriate behavior (littering, partying, fighting, etc.)
- Visitor Safety and theft

Topic: Observations and Suggestions

- Public is unaware of the RRAFT and confused about its role
- FWP could increase awareness of RRAFT and generate more public comment
- The definition of the term "Quality of Experience" is dependant upon the individual.
- Quality of experience seems to be based somewhat on solitude, and those quality experiences are becoming harder to find.
- Anglers and non-anglers have observed crowded experiences
- Quick and decisive action is desirable
- Crowding seems to be the worst at access points
- FWP's assistance with traffic flow at popular sites during congested times is beneficial
- There are large numbers of people using access sites as "hang outs"
- Some are willing to accept use restrictions and others are not
- Positive experiences are occurring in crowded settings
- Commercial use should be more appropriately distributed
- Single hook, barbless, and catch and release fishing regulations are favorable

- ***Introduction to Statewide River Recreation Rules***

-Charlie Sperry

-Charlie explained that the Statewide River Recreation Rules were adopted by the FWP Commission in 2004. These rules were created by a 22 member statewide River Recreation Advisory Council (RRAC) over the course of about 13 months. The purpose of the rules is to provide direction to FWP, the FWP Commission, and Citizen Advisory Groups when making decisions regarding river recreation planning and management. The rules are overarching guidelines that can be applied to individual rivers. They also provide common terms and definitions for river recreation management. Charlie then led the group through each of the rules, highlighting important points and explaining them in detail.

-Question:

Charlie was asked to explain the timeframe required for a recommendation to be adopted as an FWP Commission rule. He answered that an average timeframe could be around 6 months from start to finish.

- ***Discussion of the River Recreation Advisory Council (RRAC) Guiding Principles***

-The Guiding Principles were created to represent the collective values of the RRAC participants. There are two purposes of the Guiding Principles: (1) They provide the group with boundaries when deliberating a point or making a decision and (2) They were recommended for use in guiding citizen advisory groups and agency staff when developing river recreation management plans. The RRAC acknowledged that future advisory groups may have different values and beliefs but felt the Guiding Principles could serve as a starting point for discussions.

-Group Exercise

-The RRAFT Committee split up into four groups, reading through each of the guiding principles and discussing whether they agreed with each of the principles. Following the discussion, groups reported back to the Committee regarding Guiding Principles with which they agreed, disagreed, or wanted clarification.

- ***Agenda Modification & Homework Assignment***

- The Introduction to the Blackfoot section of this week's agenda was rescheduled for next month's meeting.

-The homework assignment for next meeting is to review the Blackfoot River Management Direction and Review the Issues Summary.

- ***Meeting Adjourned at 9:00 PM***

NEXT MEETING

Tuesday, August 7, 2007
6:30 pm – 9:00 pm
FWP Region 2 Office
3201 Spurgin Road